



March 27, 2009

First budget is released!

Greetings friends and neighbors,

After eleven weeks of session, **we finally have the first of three budget proposals** from the Senate. The transportation budget was released this week, and it has a number of good things for our district. I'll go more into detail about it in next week's update. The budget has yet to be heard in committee and there could be changes before it's passed. The budget is 69 pages long, and I have to read all of it before I know how I'll vote.

There are now two more budgets to be released...the capital budget, which funds local projects across the state, and the operating budget, which funds state government and is the main issue that everyone is talking about but no one has seen. We've heard the majority party may make it public on Monday, but we don't know for sure as **they don't include us in the budget writing process.**

Several tentative budget-release dates have already come and gone however, so I'm not getting my hopes up that we'll actually see a budget proposal Monday. Apparently there are some hang-ups between the majority party in both the House and Senate, and they have to work those issues out before they can present their ideas.

Still, I'm very anxious to see the budget proposal as it continues to be the focal point of this legislative session. As all of you who attended my town halls noted, taxes are your number one concern and this budget proposal will tell us if the majority party intends on cutting services and programs, raising your taxes, or both.

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Letters from home



Each day, I receive and send out almost 100 letters to constituents like you regarding various bills or issues. It's amazing that I have a stack of letters on my desk each day waiting for responses.

You've been writing me about all sorts of issues, from domestic partnerships and health care to the dog kennel bill and others. **Thank you for being so active in your state government!** Please keep it up and tell your friends and neighbors to contact their senator or representative as well, because it's going to take a lot of citizen input to get this state moving in the right direction again.

Agri-business bill stalls in committee

One of the bills I sponsored this session would have protected certain business owners from being on the hook for back property taxes after unclear language in the law was discovered. While [Senate Bill 5817](#) had broad bipartisan support and received a favorable recommendation from the agriculture committee, it was never voted on by the Ways and Means Committee and is, for all intents and purposes, dead. The [companion bill](#) in the House of Representatives met a similar fate. As of right now, it looks like we're kind of up the creek.



However, the creek has currents that can be maneuvered and I'll be talking to the department of revenue about getting an emergency extension for those property owners that would protect them until a new law can be passed next year. I will make sure to keep a close eye on this issue so that these individuals won't have to worry about suffering yet another economic blow.

In closing...

Again, if you'd like to share your concerns with me or ask me a question, please feel free to send me an e-mail to becker.randi@leg.wa.gov. You can also visit my legislative website at www.SenateRepublicans.wa.gov/Becker, where you'll find a link to my [sponsored bills](#) where you can keep track of what I'm doing. **And please consider forwarding this e-mail to anyone you think might be interested in receiving it. Ask them to contact me so I can add them to my distribution list.**

I look forward to your comments and suggestions on these issues or anything else coming before the Legislature. My office phone number is (360) 786-7602, or you can write me at 115B Irv Newhouse Building, Olympia, WA 98504. Thank you for allowing me the privilege of serving you in the Washington State Senate. It is truly an honor.

Sincerely,

A handwritten signature in dark ink that reads "Randi Becker" with a long, sweeping horizontal line extending from the end of the name.

Randi Becker
2nd District State Senator

